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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA – UAW

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Testimony of John Murphy on behalf of United Auto Workers Local 376  
and the Connecticut Citizen Action Group

Government Administration and Elections Committee Public Hearing  
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

**In support of:**

**HB 6578 -- An Act Concerning Participation in the Electoral Process**

**SB 753 -- An Act Concerning the Counting of Incarcerated Persons for Purposes of  
Determining Legislative Districts**

**SB 1017 -- An Act Concerning Election Administration**

Good evening Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, ranking members Sampson and  
Mastrofrancesco and members of the committee,

My name is John Murphy and I live in East Hartford, Connecticut. On behalf of United Auto  
Workers Local 376 and the Connecticut Citizen Action Group, I am testifying today in favor of  
HB 6578 -- An Act Concerning Participation in the Electoral Process, SB 753 -- An Act Concerning  
the Counting of Incarcerated Persons for Purposes of Determining Legislative Districts and SB  
1017 -- An Act Concerning Election Administration.

All four bills are about increasing voter participation and voter confidence in democracy. HB  
6578 and SB 753 are about racial equity and justice. HB 6578 allows people on parole to vote.  
Parolees in Connecticut are overwhelmingly African American and Latino. We believe that if  
you are not incarcerated, you should be able to vote. Formerly incarcerated people have a hard  
enough time rebuilding their lives searching for a job and housing. If we want to them to  
become productive members of society, we shouldn't be denying them the right to participate  
in our democracy.

Connecticut should not be proud of the fact that we have the most stringent criminal disenfranchisement laws in the Northeast, and we are the only state in the region that prohibits parolees from voting. This must change.

HB 6578 will restore fairness to districts where parolees reside, as does SB 753, righting another racial inequity. For purposes of redistricting, people should be counted in their communities where they lived at the time of incarceration, not in the towns where they are incarcerated.

Automatic Voter Registration, also known as AVR, will simplify and streamline how we register to vote, and is supported by 77% of Connecticut voters. AVR will increase the security and integrity of our voter rolls by updating bad addresses and duplicate registrations.

SB 1017 would allow voters currently qualifying to vote absentee retain the freedom and convenience we had in 2020 to use their town's official, secure ballot drop boxes, just as I did last August and November. Again, we should be enabling voter participation and peace of mind dropping their ballot off in person, not discouraging it.

In closing, HB 6578 and Senate Bills 753 and 1017 will go a long way in building racial equity and increased voter participation, making our democracy vibrant and strong. Thank you.